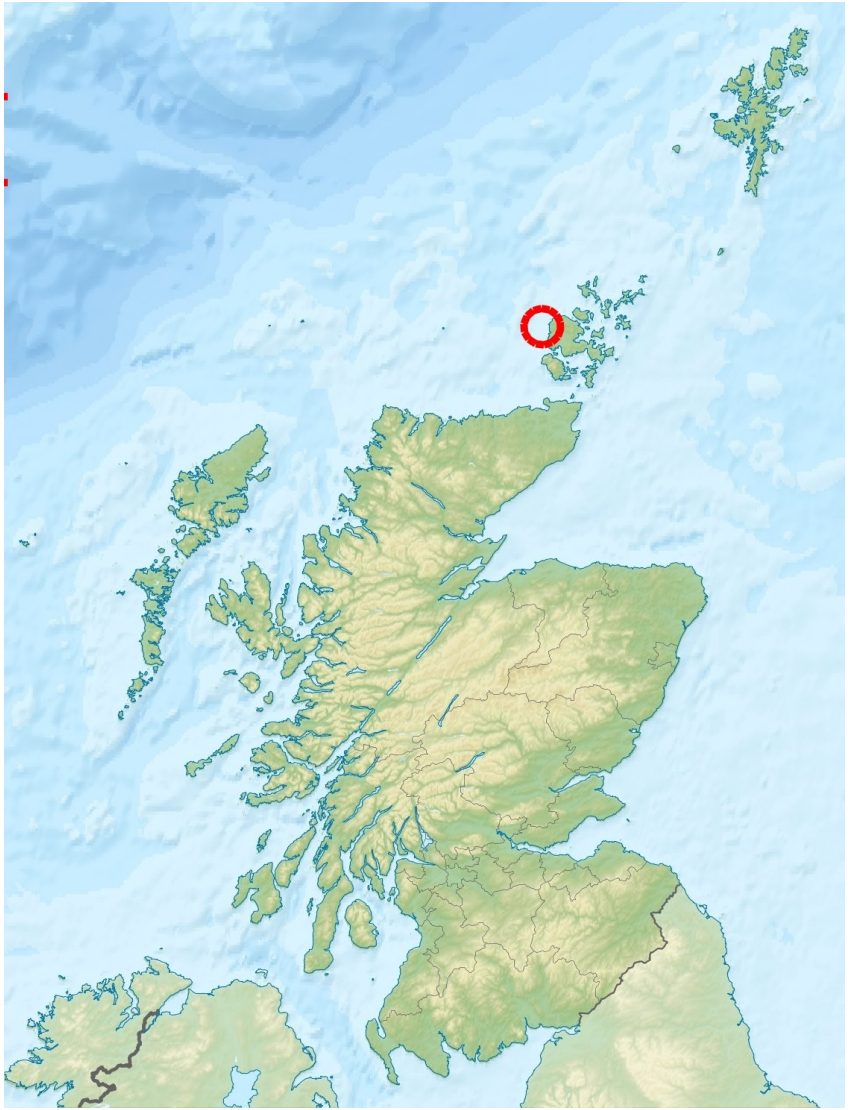
Skara Brae

A 5,000 year old Settlement in the British Isles

Euramerican National Assembly

A quick introduction to an ancient European settlement



Skara Brae is in the Orkney Islands, North of Scotland above most of the Island of Britain

It is a stone-age settlement occupied from 3180 BC to around 2500 BC. The houses are earth-sheltered.

An Aerial View

Skara Brae consists of 10 distinct dwellings, housing up to 150 people

A PLAN OF
SKARA BRAE
Skara Brae was inhabited for several centuries. Archaeologists think that the settlement did not grow larger than eight structures housing 50 to 100 people.
HEARTH
LIVING AREA
DRAIN
MAIN PASSAGE
YOU ARE HERE
N
KEY
1 ~ 8 Phase 2 houses
9 ~ 10 Phase 1 houses

- Each dwelling has built-up stone and earth surrounding it to make up the walls

Although the Bay of Skaill is cold and breezy, the interiors of the houses were warm and cozy.

This image, from a reconstruction shows passages into the interior

The insides, with covering roofs, had large interior spaces which were warm, dry and comfortable

Minus the roof, the interiors were large and well organized.

They had rock shelves, outlined hearths and individual sleeping cells

Individual buildings were connected by wind protected passages

- There was a common layout of the interiors

The People

- The people were known as “The Grooved Ware” people due to their unique pottery patterns
- They were “pastoralists” meaning they raised goats and maybe cows

The People

There is also some evidence of small-scale farming.

The area is relatively flat, with some small, rolling hills.

Grooved Ware are found across all of the British Isles

The People

Because they were stone-aged people, their toolkits were bone, rock and clay.

Here are flint arrowheads of the Grooved Ware people.

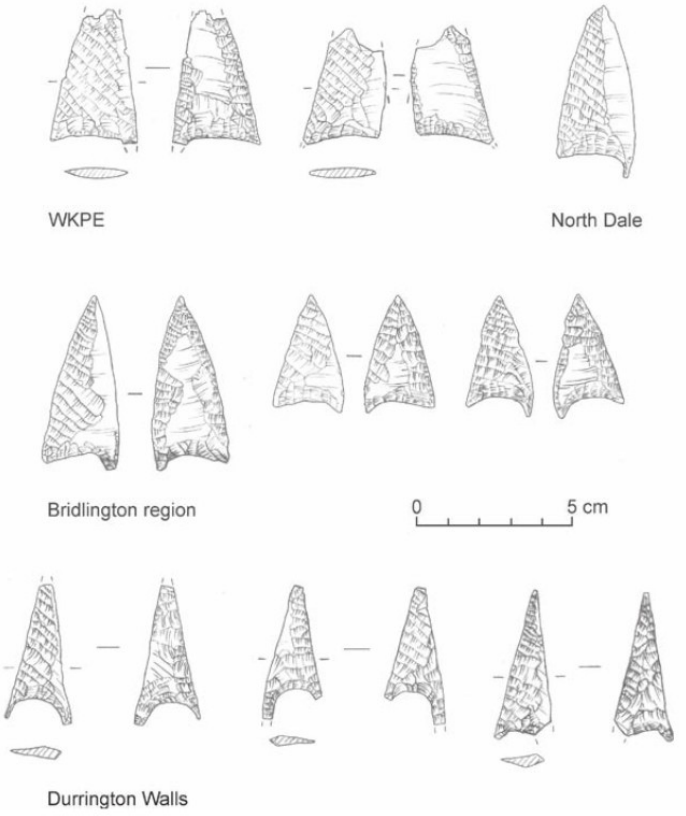


Figure 10.4. Ripple-flaked oblique arrowheads from WKPE (redrawn from AKM), North Dale (after Evans 1897, fig. 336), North Dale and Wilsthorpe (after Manby 1974, fig. 34), and Durrington Walls (after Wainwright and Longworth 1971, fig. 74). Note the broad form and diminutive tangs of the northern examples, and the markedly concave bases of the Durrington arrowheads.

The People

They’re known as “Grooved Ware” because of the unique patterns that were grooved into their pottery

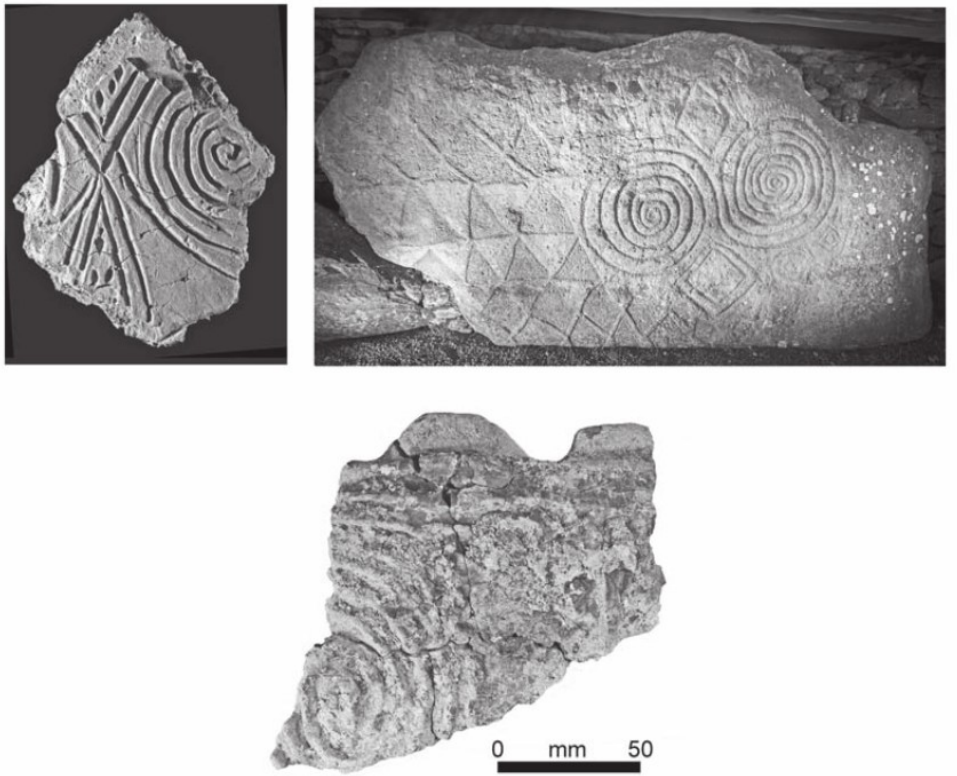


Figure 2.6. Top: the Skara Brae ‘spiral and lozenge’ sherd with its design comparandum *at Newgrange passage tomb, Co. Meath, kerbstone 67 (images: National Museums Scotland and Anthony Murphy/www.mythicalireland.com). Bottom: sherd with spiral decoration from Links of Noltland (reproduced by permission of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Licence no. IMSL-R-205195).*

- The Grooved Ware people also built other stone structures across Britain

Standing Stones of Stenness, Orkney

Ring of Brodgar, Orkney

The People

About 90% of the Grooved Ware genetics were replaced by the arrival of Corded Ware people, there is still some genetic contribution to modern Britains.

The End